

Federal Minister for the Environment,
Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety
Barbara Hendricks
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Germany

President-elect of the European Commission
Mr Jean-Claude Juncker
European Commission
1049 Brussels
Belgium

Courtesy translation

Dear Mr Juncker,

In addition to the information presented in my letter of 22 August 2014, I would like to address several points of your proposals for the new Commission concerning both structure and content.

In the Political Guidelines for the next European Commission you state that you strongly believe in the potential of green growth and in your Mission Letter to Commissioner Karmenu Vella you ask that he develop green growth further.

I completely agree with your assessment. The new lead markets for environmental and efficiency technologies account for more than two trillion euros per year around the globe, as can be seen in the German Government's GreenTech Atlas. In these fields new, skilled employment opportunities can be established, especially in countries working through the financial crisis, as the EU's Environment and Labour Ministers recently emphasised at their first joint informal meeting in Milan. Studies conducted at the Commission's request found that investments in resource efficiency could create two million new jobs in Europe by 2030 while increasing growth by one percent.

We can only make optimal use of this enormous potential for green growth if the Commissioners for Environment and Climate Action are closely integrated into all the Commission's efforts to promote jobs, growth and investment. The Commissioner for

Environment must therefore also make a substantial contribution to the proposed jobs, growth and investment package. The Commissioner for Environment should also always be part of the inner circle of the project team for jobs, growth and investment under Vice-President Jyrki Katainen. The Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy (climate and energy targets) as well as the Commissioner for Environment (green growth, especially resource efficiency) have a significant role to play in the European Semester, too. They should therefore be part of the relevant team (the project team for economic and monetary union, as I understand it). The mid-term review of the Europe 2020 strategy should be used to better integrate resource efficiency potential into the strategy.

I would also like to call your attention to the 7th Environment Action Programme, in which the Commission, Council and European Parliament together established the framework for European environment policy until 2020. I am sure that we agree that this programme is the foundation of the work of the Commissioner for Environment, in particular.

Finally, I want to be frank with you that your asking the Commissioner for Environment to evaluate the potential for merging and modernising the Birds and Habitats directives in this form is a cause of concern to me. If current trends continue, we will not be able to achieve the objectives of the EU biodiversity strategy by 2020; we must step up our efforts. The directives are a central, successful cornerstone of European biodiversity conservation. The first species are returning. At the same time, they are firmly anchored in administrative practice and provide the legal security companies require. We need the directives and they are working - even in a highly industrialised country such as Germany. The process of merging the directives would bring years of uncertainty and probably also lead to the dissolution of today's very constructive cooperation between the various interest groups into renewed fundamental debates about nature conservation in Europe.

Yours sincerely,
signed: Barbara Hendricks

cc: President of the European Parliament
Mr Martin Schulz
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